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Administrator,

This week the Humane Society of the United States presented our own Bob Kavlock with the Russell and Burch Award. Bob has provided leadership in advancing computational toxicology at our Agency, including serving as the first Director of our National Center for Computational Toxicology. Helping to significantly improve chemical screening methods allows EPA to test thousands of chemicals for potential health effects, and has the potential to reduce reliance on animal testing. Bob received the award at the Tenth World Congress on Alternatives & Animal Use in the Life Sciences and the role of Computational Toxicology in advancing science and public health.

Richard Yamada and Bruce Rodan's visit to Cincinnati this week went well and they appreciated having lunch with Craig Butler, Director of Ohio EPA, and Beth Messer, Ohio EPA Chief of Drinking and Ground Waters Division. Bruce and Richard met with scientists and managers during Testing and Evaluation facilities tours.

Hot issues

State Commissioners Visit to EPA-RTP

On August 30, ORD, in collaboration with North Carolina's Department of Environmental Quality, is hosting the Region 4 state environmental agency directors at the EPA lab in Research Triangle Park, NC. The meeting will give states the opportunity to learn about EPA research and identify opportunities for collaboration. Directors from Kentucky, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Virginia will attend, along with senior leadership from Region 4 and ORD. Topics to be discussed at the meeting include PFAS, emerging/unregulated drinking water contaminants, smoke emissions from wildfires/controlled burns, an early warning system for harmful algal blooms, and air sensor technology.

ORD Briefs NC DEQ on Cape Fear Basin PFAS analysis

Next week ORD will brief North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (NC DEQ) on the results of our PFAS analyses conducted on the samples collected by NC DEQ from the Cape Fear River Basin. The results include analysis for GenX along with ORD's non-targeted analysis.

Upcoming public events

Small Drinking Water Systems Workshop

ORD's Small Drinking Water Systems Workshop is going well and participants appreciated the remarks provided by Richard Yamada during the opening session. The workshop has nearly 400 participants this year, representing 44 states, 4 tribal nations, 35 state drinking water programs, 17 utilities, Canada, Brazil and Israel and other federal agencies (USDA, IHS, USFWS, NIST, VA, and several branches of the military).

EPA and Choctaw Nation Study Potential Waterborne Disease

ORD researchers will train participants from EPA Region 6 and the Oklahoma Environmental Office of the Choctaw Nation on collection of saliva samples and interviews with attendees at the Choctaw Labor Day Festival. Samples will be analyzed by EPA as part of a study on waterborne infection risk evaluation funded by EPA's RARE program. Results of the study will improve understanding of the types of potentially infectious diseases in the tribal population. Information will be used by tribal environmental officials to manage drinking water plant operations and protection of drinking water sources.

Meeting with Canada

On August 28 ORD's Rusty Thomas will meet with representatives from Health Canada(HC) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) to discuss progress on developing and implementing activities under the Regulatory Cooperation Council Risk Assessment Workplan to prioritize chemicals for potential health effects. EPA, HC, and ECCC have common goals under the Canadian Environmental Protection Act and Toxic Substances Control Act to reduce risks to human health and the environment posed by chemicals. The Canada-U.S. collaboration in these areas will make work more effective and efficient for both governments, as they work towards joint program initiatives, and for stakeholders who will benefit from an aligned approach on chemicals management.

Science Advisory Board

The EPA Science Advisory Board (SAB) will hold a public meeting on August 29 – 30, and will cover two topics related to ORD. On August 29th, a quality review of the SAB Chemical Assessment Advisory Committee's (CAAC) report of the peer review of the draft Toxicological Review of Hexahydro-1,3,5-trinitro-1,3,5-triazine (RDX) will be conducted. On August 30thORD will present on recent activities in the IRIS Program.

Small Business Innovation (SBIR) Phase 1 Awards

ORD is working with OPA and Regional communication leads in preparation of announcing $1.6 million in funding for 15 small businesses receiving Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) Phase I awards. The announcement is anticipated for Sept. 5, 2017.These contracts are awarded as part of EPA's SBIR annual two-phase competition. Companies first compete for a Phase I award of $100,000 to develop technologies that provide sustainable solutions for environmental issues. After receiving a Phase I award, companies are eligible to compete for a Phase II award of $300,000 to further develop and commercialize the technology.

Field studies to support cleanup at Fort Devens Superfund Site, MA

August 28-31 ORD scientists are conducting field studies to provide performance verification for groundwater remediation and to facilitate evaluation of new monitoring tools to measure groundwater seepage flux. ORD is providing technical assistance to Region 1 and the Massachusetts Dept. of Environmental Protection to investigate the impact of recently implemented remedial measures on groundwater flow and contaminant transport. Fort Devens is a former military training base with petroleum, arsenic, heavy metals, and other hazardous chemical contamination in the groundwater, soil, and sediment.

State Support: Baton Rouge, LA
On August 31, in collaboration with Region 6, ORD will conduct a Workshop on the Decision Analysis for a Sustainable Environment, Economy, and Society (DASEES) tool. This workshop is being developed and conducted for the Commissioner of Louisiana's Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, Louisiana Department of Health and Hospitals, Louisiana State University, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Region 6 staff to provide participants hands on experience with the DASEES tool. This workshop is in preparation for subsequent workshops with dairy farmers to develop (1) potential options for addressing water quality problems and (2) approaches to sustainable and resilient dairy operations. The end goal is to help the farmers identify innovative and economically viable solutions for nutrient and sediment runoff control.

Last week Highlights

Contaminated Site Remediation at St. Louis River Area of Concern
ORD scientists are collaborating this month with the U.S. Geological Survey's Mercury Laboratory and the University of Minnesota - Duluth to conduct a field study of dioxins, PCBs, and mercury bioaccumulation in the St. Louis River Area of Concern. A novel application of mercury stable isotope ratios to identify legacy sources of mercury in game fish will be used. The study provides support for planned remediation projects led by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and includes data for remediation site prioritization, tools for evaluating remediation options, and implementation of monitoring to assess remedy effectiveness and Beneficial Use Impairment status. Field support will be provided by staff from the EPA Great Lakes National Program Office, EPA Region 10, MPCA, and the Wisconsin DNR.

Legislative Assistant Visits Hatfield Marine Science Center in Newport, OR
On August 10, EPA scientists briefed Sarah Round, Legislative Assistant to Representative Suzanne Bonamici (Oregon District 1) on ORD research to protect coastal water quality and shellfish and other coastal organisms, which are economically important for food and recreation. She learned how excess nutrients discharged to coastal waters can harm the environment and how ongoing research will help communities and coastal states effectively manage water quality. Ms. Round assists Rep. Bonamici with issues concerning the Science and Technology Committee, the Education and Workforce Committee, the Ocean Caucus, and the Estuary Caucus.

ORD and OLEM's Consequence Management Advisory Division (CMAD) Collaborate with DHS to Enhance Outdoor Biothreat Sampling Capabilities
Staff from ORD and CMAD travelled to Ponca City, Oklahoma from August 8-10, to begin planning a collaborative study with the US Department of Homeland Security. EPA's portion of the study will focus on the evaluation and development of environmental sampling approaches for large outdoor areas. Currently, the performance of biothreat sampling and analysis techniques is largely unknown when applied to outdoor surfaces and matrices. Response and clearance decisions hinge upon accurate sampling data, therefore an assessment of current capabilities is imperative. The results of this study will allow EPA to make strategic R&D investments to further enhance its ability to fulfill its homeland security responsibilities.

Risk Assessment Forum
On August 22, Bob Kavlock announced the appointments of 35 members to the 2018-2021 Risk Assessment Forum (RAF). The members are distributed across the Ecological Oversight Committee, Human Health Oversight Committee, and the Exposure Oversight Committee. In 2019, the RAF will begin

a regular two-year rotation of half its members. Newly appointed members, as well as those candidates not selected, have received email notification.